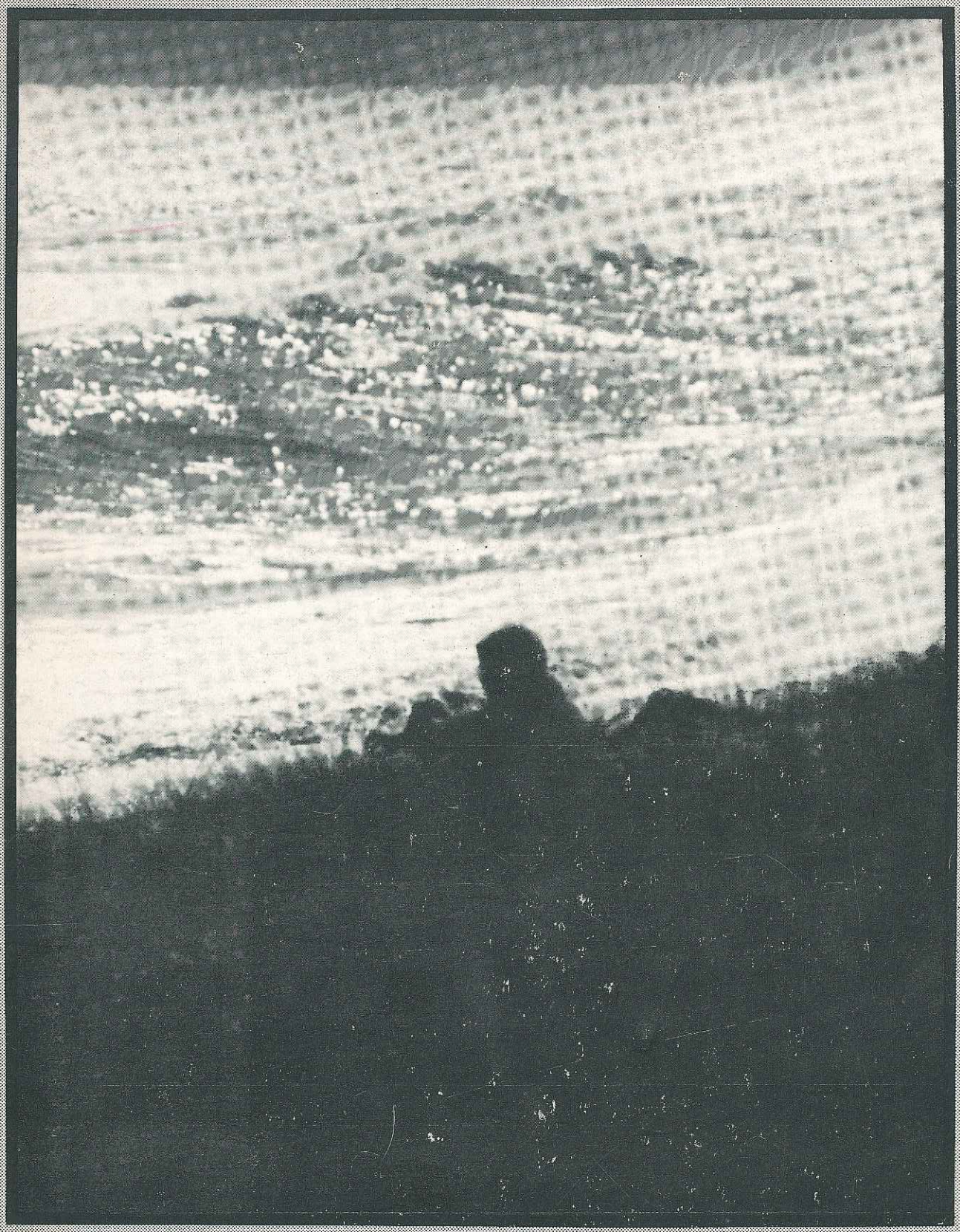

# MEDIA 74

MEDIA: The Literary Magazine of Palm Beach Junior College, Lake Worth, Florida 33460

Volume XVIII April, 1974

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*Ann Fotorny*

## THE JUNKYARD EPITAPH

Today I'm torn and tattered
Like an old abandoned shoe
Which was owned one time and cherished then;
No longer is this true.

My master has grown bored with me;
Rejected now I stay,
Although my sole is thick enough
To last another day.

My laces are still usable,
My color only dim;
So why am I forsaken
When old junk I've never been?

I sit and stare around me
At the other sad debris;
All have still so much to give
But this no one can see.

I take my place reluctantly
In this rejected set;
For though I still have much to give
My worth none can detect.

I wait alone among these many
Odds and ends – these parts;
I bow my head and wonder
Why a junkyard full of hearts?

*Linda Ryan*

whish!

boom!

bam!

. . . close the tent flap . . .
never to see you again.

What a parody!
a circus entertainment
i've experienced with you.
you paraded your elephants -
stomped them into my heart.
the freak show was an excursion
on many a day.
claws bared
your tigers and lions ripped at my soul,
only to be replaced by the clown's act.
and then up on the tightrope
ready and willing to fall.
acrobatics were the favorite
as you whirled in and out of my life.
Tears of Laughter and Wonder.
Applause and more Applause!
You deserve it for your act.

Now on to the next show
with someone new.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

to D. G. . . . at a wild party

Pardon me if I seem to be upset
As I look across the room
I wouldn't dream of spoiling anybody's fun
But there's something in my eye, and
It's just the smoke of someone's cigarette
I think, because my eyes've started to run,
And it's alright, yes,
It's fine . . . and I'm having a good time
It's just that I've got something in my eye
And I don't know what it is . . .

* * *

Excuse me, please, if I appear to cry
As I stare at you
I wouldn't think to muddle and confuse your head
But there's someone on my mind, and
It's just the memory of long and desperate dreams
I think; because my mind is going gray.
But it's alright, yes
It's fine . . . I'm still having a good time
It's just that I've got someone on my mind.
And I don't know who she is . . .

* * *

Don't mind me if my eyes are full of tears
As I gaze into your face
I wouldn't dream of spoiling anybody's fun
But there's something in my eye, and
It can't be just somebody's cigarette
I think, because I'm crying, too.
But it's alright, yes,
It's fine . . . and I'm having a good time
It's just that I've got someone in my eye.
And I don't know who it is . . .
Could it be you?

*David Drummond*

# HIGHLAND NEMESIS

The five men walked into the bank making the same effect a corpse would have if it sat up in the middle of a wake. There was silence, shocked silence. Then the mutterings began only to be cut quiet by a loud commanding voice. "Alright everybody quiet!" came from the tallest one. He pointed an evil looking sawn-off shotgun at the nervous line of customers in front of the only tellers window. "Everybody shut-up and nobody will get hurt!" barked the tall one again. He scanned the line of people with his eyes and shotgun. In the dead silence that followed both parties hesitated for an instant to inspect the other.

All five men wore black ski masks and dark, heavy jackets. All of them carried shotguns – sawn-off. The tall one slid behind the counter and grabbed the teller. If the teller had any thoughts of resisting, they vanished when the shotgun was pointed at him. They shoved him with the others and lined all of them against the far wall.

"Harry you watch this lot. Shorty keep your eye on the front door. You two get that safe open quickly!" ordered the tall one.

Harry spread his feet and braced himself. He was a killer. He grinned behind his mask and steadied his shotgun. He was built like a bear and had all the charm of a sabre-tooth. He rubbed the shiny barrels of the shotgun and spoke to petrified customers. "Nobody move now," he grinned, "or my friend here will get angry." He gave a high pitched giggle and glanced over at Shorty.

Shorty stood peering out of the door. He pulled a silver flask from his back pocket and took a quick pull; then nervously stuffed it back into his pocket. The other three men were still in the back hidden from view. A few of the persons that were lined up shuffled awkwardly. "Now now, nobody move I said." leered Harry. All of them stiffened into silence. One of the women softly began to whimper.

* * * * * *

Normally no gang would bother to raid a bank as small as the one in Dundee Green. Placed far in the north of Scotland, the bank was quiet and usually saw little big business. However, with the Army playing war games a little over twenty miles away, a large payroll had been deposited in Dundee Green's one and only bank. The surrounding moors and wild highlands proved to be perfect terrain for the Army's outdated method of warfare. War had changed, but not the Army's way of playing it.

It had been thirty minutes since the gang had entered the bank, and now all five were crushed together inside a speeding landrover. They flew at breakneck speed across the moors, making use of poor country roads when they thought it safe.

"You're a bloody fool Briggs!" exploded Emerson, the leader of the gang, "Now it's murder!"

Briggs tried to control his mounting fury. His bear-like hands clutched his still warm shotgun. He let out a long harsh breath and his eyes blazed at the floor. Behind him sat Shorty – with a whiskey flask at his lips – and the two others with the canvas bags. The bags contained over eighteen thousand pounds of Army payroll. They kept a constant watch behind for signs of pursuit.

"She was hysterical, she was!" hissed Briggs, "What could I do, she was almost out the door?"

"Shorty would have pushed her back inside." shot back Emerson, "But no, you had to have your fun didn't you? Plastered her all over the damn wall. I knew it was a mistake to give you a bloddy gun in the first place!"

Shorty giggled from the back of the bouncing landrover. "She did make a mess din' she boss?"

"You damn drunk!" shouted Emerson, "Shut your bloody face! Just keep out of this!"

Shorty looked like a slapped child for a moment, then took a pull from his flask. After a few minutes he chirped up, "Boss, we got the money though, he?"

Emerson gave a weary sigh.

* * * * * *

Entering the streets by the harbour, the landrover slowed down so as not to attract any attention. Still no signs of pursuit. Emerson looked at the many fishing boats and trawlers which filled the bay. "Which is ours?"

One of the men in the back lifted up the flap and peered out across the water. "Right at the end of the jetty, that twin engined job."

Emerson stopped the landrover and all five got out. The path was too narrow for the landrover so they would have to walk to the end of the stone jetty. "You two take the bags, Shorty take the guns – if you can still walk."

Briggs was still sulking and stood scowling across the bay. The others went on their way to the far end of the jetty, leaving him to come slowly behind them. They had almost reached the end of the wharf when a shout spun them all round. It was a lone policeman inspecting their abandoned landrover.

"Christ!" was all Emerson could say.

Shorty nervously pulled his flask from his pocket. Emerson turned around and slapped it straight from his hands into the bay. It skittered across the stones before disappearing over the edge and into the water.

"C'mon, let's get moving!"

Within seconds the boat was pulling away. The policeman had now run from the landrover to their departure point. Briggs wrenched a shotgun from the bags and let go with both barrels.

The constable's blue uniform splashed jets of bright red in every direction. He was taken clear off his feet to be sent crashing down onto his back against the stone floor.

"Briggs! You bastard!" screamed Emerson.

The other three paled. Emerson turned around as though dazed and clutched the boat rail. He was silent for a long time, and stood staring ahead of them, the wind and spray flying unoticed against his face.

* * * * * *

The gang had planned to cruise down the coast and avoid any possible roadblocks put out by the police. Now the crime was murder; they could not allow themselves to be caught. They had barely been out to sea for an hour when a large Coast Guard vessel became visible on the horizon.

Taking no chances, Emerson gave the order to head for deep, open sea. The eminous figure of the Coast Guard's vessel turned slowly and deliberately to follow their course. There could be no doubt that the commander of the ship knew who they were; they had to flee. Thanks to Emerson's foresight large quantities of extra fuel had been stored aboard ahead of time. This would allow them to run for quite some time as long as the pursuer was not any faster.

The smaller craft flew across the sea for what seemed like days with the Coast Guard closing in all the time. The open sea became choppy making progress even slower for the escaping gang. Gradually dusk slid across the sky. The gang still fled.

"She's turning!" exclaimed Shorty.

They could not believe their eyes! Everyone of them was soaked to the skin as they peered behind at their pursuer in disbelief. The ship was frighteningly close and now chose to turn slowly, ever so slowly around and away from them.

"Anybody here read Morse?" asked Emerson as the ship began to signal. When there was no reply he spoke again, still staring into the twilight and the shrinking silhouette, "Maybe they need more fuel."

The others either agreed with him or were too tired to argue. They still sailed on and all heard the surf at the same instant. "Land!" gasped Shorty.

"Yes land." echoed Emerson. His voice was dull and he still stared after the vanishing ship as though in a trance.

In the evening light the island looked like a giant burial mound. It was sombre and dark and strangely quiet. Still the gang landed safely and bedded down a few hundred yards inland. They slept like dead men.

Shorty was the first to wake and began coughing from the moment he did so. The others also woke up in response to his coughing. They yawned and stretched, rubbing their eyes excessively. One by one they stood up and plodded down to the beath. Nobody spoke except for Briggs who gave Shorty a clout for coughing too much.

Every fifty yards or so along the beath was a sign post, all of which were facing out to sea. As far as they could see they stretched along the island's coastline.

"What the hell are these?" growled Briggs.

Shorty was peering at one which had leaned over to an angle of forty-five. He kept coughing and had difficulty trying to read. "Well, what's it say?" said Briggs impatiently.

Shorty cleared his throat, "Danger. Her Majesty's Government forbids the landing or beaching or any ship or aircraft on this island until . . ." he broke off coughing. "This island is officially declared unsafe until the year two thousand and seven."

"Declared what! Unsafe!" shouted Briggs. "What are they talking about?"

The four men all turned to Emerson as chelas to their master. Emerson was gazing out to sea as though still looking for the ship which had left them last night. He knew why they had turned around, he didn't know at the time, but he did now. A weak smile broke across his face.

"This is what they called Armageddon Island. Remember about five years ago in the newspapers, that controversey about chemical warfare? They tested some on a remote Scottish island . . . a highly dangerous form of Anthrax I think." he stopped and coughed before continuing. "It was too powerful . . . they couldn't control it. I think the whole island was abandoned by the military in the same day. Do you see any animals around or any birds?"

They gazed around at an empty sky, not even a seagull. The only sounds were the wind and the sea and Shorty's wracking cough. "I don't understand, boss?" he managed to say.

"It means," Emerson said dryly, "it means we didn't get away after all."

*A. Lee*

Summertime
is when the spirit flows
most freely
and
The soul swells and glows
bright and warm
Overflowing
Like rays from the sun

*Margot Small*

my mother wore a silver key
around her neck
to symbolize the unlocking of hearts
& doors
the locking up of prison cells
& old tool sheds.
It was the master key for everything.
how fitting.
She was the master of our lives.

*Sarah George*

## METAMORPHOSIS

Alone inside myself I stayed. And in that state
I found that I could not relate
to what I'd done and what I had to do.
For I refused to face the truth. And in the sleeping sky
His Word was shining brightly in my eyes,
full-filling me with what I had to do.
I stared intently at the message clear.
I'd heard of Change eternal, and as the Change came near
my life formed 'round me as a silken cloud;
and as I floated, blinded by the shroud,
my cries betrayed the fear in me.
I was tightly wrapped about. So far
just the tobacco in a newly-aged cigar.
I hoped that there was nothing left to be
and yet I knew there was. And I could not accept the way
for I was not yet ready for the day.
And then my Father came to me and cleansed me of my sins.
He put an end to all my dying whims
and smashed the walls of mushy grey;
and dared me live again and to be me.
His Word proclaimed that I should cease to be
a little worm. I would have found the way
to Heaven, and become a butterfly.
But at the time I didn't have the fortitude to try.
"Why must I change today?" I wondered as the bell rang free
and Father raced to finalize my charted destiny.
Then I began to understand the ways of life and living.
And passers-by that passed by saw me lying very still,
involved in paying my last bill.
I finally accepted what would be. My Father, while forgiving
all my doubts, assured me that the changes would run true.
I trusted Him. (The smartest thing that I would ever do!)
Past stars and suns and past the earth's sad smile
I watched the world shrink with every mile,
and looked down Heaven's road.
I saw my Father beckon me, and then
I knew I'd never change again.
Warm, milky rays rose from the sky and, as they flowed,
coated the universe. Metamorphosis had laid the final stone.
And I flew off and left behind my worn cocoon, alone.

*Thomas P. Knippel*

*Joel Davies*

why did you speak of love
on those warm summer nights
when desire united us as one?
why did you gaze into the depths of my eyes
as the lips of the ocean curled around us
and speak with truth glances?
why did you weary of me
after countless days of love
and then kiss me goodbye?

no, i don't expect you to answer,
i don't think you know yourself.

once you loved me, this i believe
and in moments of uncertainty
it is all i have to cling to.

when doubt clouds my mind,
and emptiness rises within me
i run into the past
and pretend all over again.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

Me and You.

While I am one
I need a two.
I must be one
and still have two.
As I am one,
you can be two.
Find two in one
and one in two.
One stays one
and two still two.
Now you have me
and I have you.
Still one and two,
but me and you.

*A. Lee*

THINKING

I haven't talked to God in years
I find it hard to talk
to someone who isn't there
and doesn't answer.
I haven't died because of it
I haven't even gone crazy;
at least it doesn't seem so
to me – perhaps to others.
My life will not rot
My days will not be insignificant
My abilities will not deteriorate
At least I so not believe so
– for I believe in ME.

*Lin Harper*

DEATH

Through-out the years we've aged and withered
A new race we've left to do the same
And all the while we've been searching
The final goal we wish not claim

Distaste we feel for years yet coming
Yet joy we know we've left behind
And tears do roll down withered dermis
The final goal still seems unkind

From days of vigor we have ventured
Our years are now arthritic claimed
And it is now that we must answer
The final gong our goal to claim

Yet we remember father's adage
That you've yourself your life to blame
And one sad thing our heart does chatter
Our final goal is Hell to claim

*Thomas Paul Signer*

## SIX FEET UNDER

quiet
yes, very quiet
the most erie silence ever to be found
no one can imagine the emptiness down there
complete motionless
total darkness
like a blind mans' darkness
no sight
no sound
nothing but the cold damp ground
to keep one company
stillness
and solitude
soundless, colorless, motionless
solitude
deep
dark
and lonely

who would think that amidst all this
a man lies sealed in a box
screaming and pounding with all his energy

six feet under
. . . and no way out.

*Larry Robinson*

"The Tree and Me"

The Tree and Me.
What do we have in common?
Well, we both started out in life as a seed.
As the Tree grows from its natural force, the sun, I grow
also from my natural force, other people.
If the Tree doesn't have the sun it slowly dies. If I don't
have people a round I slowly die also.
When the sun is shining, doing its best to help that Tree
grow is when that little Tree will look and act in its glory.
When other people are around, doing their best to help me
and cheer me is when I'm at my best.
We both need our forces to keep us going.
So, if that sun stays out, and those people are around,
Nature can be the most beautiful thing in this world.

*Cheryl Fraser*

## AS I SIT GAZING AT THE RED-FACED WOMAN

The streaming, fresh vanilla-custard rays
drop lightly on the forest and its own.
Without a peer, the bright One never stays
the spilling of her blood onto our home.
The love professed by the eternal guard
enlightened mankind in our days of yore.
Today, in cloudless sky, our silent bard
sings her warm, light song. And when rockets soar
inside the vacuumed black-of-endless-miles,
on voyages to far-off snowflakes white,
the red-faced woman's never-changing smile,
in years that now are not, shall sparkle bright.
We are a new-born fawn and she is doe.
The everlasing longing of earth's friend
and mother reaches us all. We know
that even though our lives come to an end
our mother's soft, pure hands will still reach out
to fondle earth's green hills and grassy plains:
to dispel her atmospheric child's doubt;
to ease her restless offspring's growing pains.
An act of love; one priceless, all too free.
A distant eye enabling man to see.
A brilliant beacon, ever will it burn.
A gift that we on earth cannot return.

*Thomas P. Knippel*

## MORNING

The patternless maze of the new day
Forced itself, in a spiral way
Through the grayness of semi-awake
Demanding, and screaming that I partake
In actions I enjoyed only a day before,
But now find bothersome, trouble – a bore.
Demand away – to hell with you, sun!
And sleepy dreams – I've just begun.
The pillow, amoeba-like, ate my head.
Ah, how pleasant, to be digested by a bed!

*leff erly*

cold november #8

on my morning walk to class
i chanced to come across your life
in a book of poetry . . .
and there you were . . .
staring at me
from those freshly printed pages
and the cold morning wind blew
through me and changed my hairstyle
into what you wanted,
and it caught the corners of my skirt
and once again . . . you wanted to play . . .
so i read you one more time . . .
which seemed to be the extent of your life.
you spoke of rainbows
windblows
sunshows
afterglows
and fantasies of nature
i reread reread
and questioned if it's really dead.
then the wind came up again
and touched my lefthandshoulder
and i began to skip forward
into english.

*Sarah George*

Let's take a bow on the stage
and await the applause.
Such a performance!
We both had our parts
practiced to perfection.
All the world believed
we were love's companion.
Countless days the play continued -
act unfolding into act -
adapting to every mood,
every selfish desire . . .
Finally,
the stage curtain has fallen.
No encores please.
I never was much of an actress
but you taught me expertly,
molded my being to fit your story.
Enough-the chains are broken;
the house lights are dimming;
no one cares to stay,
especially me.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

ODE TO A POLITICAL SCIENCE INSTRUCTOR

Is it possible to be more absurd,
To take a topic, and make it blurred
Beyond the longest span of attention,
Murdering the slightest hope of retention,
Than to attend a scholar of foolish mind,
Who laughingly refers to his pompous blind
Bleary eyed studies as science, haha!
The bleating of sheep, a loud baa, baa!
Is a million times as salient, tried and true
Than sitting here bored, listening to you!!

*leff erly*

## LIFE'S MIRROR

In the darkened alleys of life,
Stray dogs wander amid the trash-cans
    Overflowing with refuse of yesterday's dreams.
Wandering in the shadows of today's hopelessness
In search of something unnamed, unproved
For the future.
    Something other than misery
    Something more than broken mirrors of the past.
Mirrors reflecting despair,
                Hopeless loves.
Mirrors that had shown glimpses of sunlight
Drifting down from the rooftops of an uncaring city.
Bright sunlight of love, care, hopes, and dreams
Coming in ever-growing patches on the pavement
From the cloudless, smogless sky of summer.
    No rain in sight – none in forecast,
But the weatherman was wrong, again; as usual.
    The clouds rolled in unexpectedly.
    The sunlit mirror darkened.
    The clouds boiled – with their energy.
    Lightning struck and the mirror cracked,
    Fragments splintering everywhere.
Tossed useless into the trash
    Only to be poured onto the pavement
    By stray dogs, uncaring,
                Unthinking.
    Only to be dropped and ground underfoot
    By unknowing passer-bys
    Taking a shortcut through this alley
                Of life.
Past the stray dogs and the trashcans
    Overflowing the remnants
                Of past happiness.

*Susan Kotowiez*

## A VISITATION

Moon-illuminated night.
    Someone is playing
soft stringed music in my livingroom downstairs.
I stir, thinking it a dream
but still it's there,
running chords and rippling
tonal variations,
a lively racing up and down the scale.

    What's this? An invasion of midnight music?
The melody below grows louder,
stronger, faster. I grope for the banister,
it trembles as I catch it.
Sparkling chords draw me down the stairs.

    Below, the room is glowing whitely
with the moon, who stares
directly at me through the front window. He, too,
is listening. This is what I see:
seated on a footstool, a young man –
shining black hair cascading partway down his back;
in his arms, a classical guitar.
His fingers dance upon the strings.
The moonlight buffs his silver rings.

    Why am I not enraged? Completely
at home in my livingroom!
(The door's still locked, the windows unopened.)
I hang spellbound over the stairrail, staring,
staring at the moon and the rings and the argent strings.

    He looks up and smiles; I say nothing.

    After an interval – a minute or so perhaps,
perhaps half the night –
his joyful playing ceases . . .
my friend fades on the moonlight, is a pearly shadow,
a simple visitation that is gone in one uplifting note:
Good-bye. I'm glad I met you.

*Flick Mager*

## Elemental Man

Man awakes.
He breathes in deeply and crawls in the early dawn.
He shivers.
He lights a spitting fire and it warms and cheers him.
He thirsts.
He takes a drink and it feels cold and good.
He stands up and leaves his dwelling, he works in the fields.
He sleeps away most of the night and prays to a god.

The air about him gives him life,
It flows and seeps deeper than he knows inside him.
On empty nights it moans and sighs, singing in the blackness, it keeps him company.
When the Sun burns, the winds steal past, soothing and caressing him,
in sympathy the air cries and cools him.

The firm ground beneath man's feet,
Houses and succours the seeds he plants. Safe from stabbing beaks they grow.
He molds the earth into shelters and is saved from teeth and claws that prowl the night.

Water flows in twinkling streams and brooks, cascading down cliffs,
Slithering across fields, bubbling and sparkling into lakes and seas.
Man sails the seas and fishes in their depths. He drinks from streams when thirsty
and cleans himself.

Fire warms him on cold nights and lights his darkness.
It cooks his food and sucks his metals from the earth.
Finally it takes it lifeless shell, dancing and flickering about him it takes him away.
The winds sweep by and carry his ashes, uniting him with earth and sea.

His bowed companions mourn his death and pray to their gods.

*A. Lee*

## Sonnet for Lynn

In reading this poor prose with sad-strung rhyme,
Try not to misconstrue my last two lines,
Which delicately hold it all. Just as
A pendulum, our love sweeps to and fro,
Soft and tender now; times of icy glass
That surely follow, show how life can go
And leave us empty, sunk in sadness. And
When I am the cause, and see her sadly cry
Those tears, which cloud fines eyes of summer sky,
I need to comfort her, then touch her hand
And put things right. Life's good when we both laugh,
Since then our time's well spent, but who can tell
What might have been. Should my epitaph
include those words '. . . not wisely but too well.'?

*A. Lee*

attempt at Haiku (or how one person can bastardize a beautiful form)

Pussy willows taken
forever dwell in earthen jars
Once they were alive.

Snow that is not snow
surrealistic mounds of flesh
More unreal than dreams.

White birch, dark green pines
each stands proud to be unique
Yet one with forest.

can we now unite
forest greens and city grays
mustn't we now try?

*Judith*

SOAP BUBBLES

For the instant
that is life
The sphere of air
travels the winds . . .
Captures a golden ray
from the sun . . .
Finds delicate another sphere
and joins it . . .
Reflects myriad colors
and my nose . . .
Soars, floats, drops lightly
to its death
Leaving in its path light
joy and gaiety.

grant my soul that instant

*Judith*

Ha Chátsu

The sun's below the trees;
cool night-breeze
stirs grey leaves.
The time when you'll be coming's very near.
Stars have sparked the night;
moons in flight,
silvered light,
announce to me that you will soon be here.

*Flick Mager*

Pun

I was walking past the office, when to my great surprise,
I realized Henry Clark was vanishing before my eyes!
He hadn't said or done too much for many a working day,
And now before my startled face he was fading quite away!
His eyebrows went, and then his hair, and then his bulbous nose.
He bent down to remove his shoes, and found he had no toes.
His hands dissoved in minutes, his feet were vanished too.
His eyes behind the spectacles had lost their faded blue.
He lost his legs as cleanly as though chomped-off by a shark.
Things were looking pretty pale for poor old Henry Clark.
His arms and body disappeared; in sheer disgust I said,
"You'll go too far one day, old boy; now quit while you're
a head!"

*Flick Mager*

God has made no greater fury
than that of the sea.
Who pounds the rocks and beach
of the innocent land?
Who can take a life as though
it were a grain of sand?
She can toss a giant ship as easily
as a baby with a boat in his bath.
She can cut and carve the shore
as though it were only soft clay.
This is the fury of the sea.

Yet, what sweeter lullabye exists than
that of the gentle waves on the beach.
Constantly lapping at the dunes on the shore
singing a song of God and Nature.
The full moon glistens over the lonely
sand where lovers go to dream.
And dreams would come true if only
you could dream all the dreams of the sea.
God he made the sea to have both sides:
the angry treacherous dark blue sea
and the gentle soothing song of love.

*Cynthia Legras*

## IN MEMORY OF MILDRED

We cannot find
reason
malice
hate
love
mercy or
explanation
in death.
Death can be both
gentle
and rough,
merciful and malicious.
In God we must find our comfort.

To you who have lost
the loved one,
the friend,
we give our sympathy -
we say we're sorry
But are we?
To her death was an end to her
incomprehensible suffering.
In death she became detached from a body
that was racking her soul with torment.

You need not say goodbye to me.
I have not gone away.
You need not cry over a body that cannot hear you.
It makes me sad.
The body was old and tormented by a demon
the doctors could not conqueor.
Don't push me back in your mind
because that is where I live.
I live in your soul
I live in your memory
Don't let me die forever.

*Cynthia Legras*

## THE RAVING

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered meak and leery,
Over many a disputed and curious tape of forgotten lore.
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone loudly rapping, rapping at my executive office door.
"Tis some reporter", I muttered, "tapping at my executive office door."
Only this and nothing more.

Ah, distinctly I remembered, in the now bleak December,
As each separate dying member wrought his sound upon the court room floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow – vainly I sought to borrow,
From administrations encased in sorrow, sorrow for the lost rapport,
For the rare and radiant ability that the reporters call rapport.
Nameless here for evermore.

Deep into the darkness peering, long I sat there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no leader ever dared to dream before.
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Ignore",
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Ignore".
Merely this and nothing more.

Open here now was the gutter, when with many a flit and flutter,
In there stepped a courtly justice, of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least omission made he, not a thing stopped or stayed he,
But with the Dean of law and statute, searched from out my office door,
Searched within the dust of malice hiding behind my office door.
Searched and waited and nothing more.

But this creature, searching lowly in the malice dust, spoke only
That single word, as if the edict in that one word did outpour,
Nothing further then he uttered – not a bylaw did he sputter,
Till I scarcely more than muttered – "Other aids have flown before –
On the morrow they will leave me, as my hopes have flown afore."
Decreed the Justice "Nevermore".

Startled at the stillness broken by a reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless", said I, "what it utters is surely mock and bore,
Sprung from the newspaper master, whom did unmercifully plaster,
Copied fast and copied faster till their line did one burden shore,
Till my words of hope turned into a melancholy burden bore."
Of it will happen, "Nevermore".

But that creature, ever prying, turned my fantasy into lying.
Straight I wheeled executive privilege in front of my office door.
Then, upon that velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fantasy unto fantasy, thinking about omissions more,
Of how this grim, ungainly, ghastly game could be spun into a lore.
Of which they speak for ever more.

Then I felt the world grow tenser, blinded by an unknown censor,
Mere tattered remnants that now lie upon the court room floor.
Leaving black marks as a token of lies their actions hath outspoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! – quit the lust for my office door,
Take they challenge from the floor – and take the tapes from out my door.
And speak of them nevermore.

And the Seeker, never flitting, still is witting, still is witting,
In the pallid dust of malice just beyond my office door.
And his eyes have all the seeming of a lawyer who is scheming,
And blind light over him streaming, throws truths shadow on the floor.
And my intergrity from out that shadow that lies crumpled on the floor,
Shall be lifted "Nevermore".

*Betsy Kilbas and*
*John Kragneck*

*Dave Alexander*

Like Miniver Cheevy, Carmody wished he had never been born, and he had reasons. Carmody entered the world ugly, as we all did, but growth did not improve his looks as it did those of the rest of us. At nineteen he was, physically, a hopeless cause. He had finally despaired of ever topping five feet seven; his scrawny physique gave ominous promise of future arthritis, fallen arches and potbelly. What could charitably be referred to as his face was topped by thinning strands of mustard-colored hair.

Unfortunately, though unable to compete for them, Carmody was as attracted to women as any more fortunate male. His endocrine system had no mercy; it was no use telling it to lay off. Carmody yearned for female presence, and it was denied him.

Now, there were compensations. Nobody really disliked Carmody; no rumors were spread about him; no one bothered to make fun of him. Men and women alike treated him with a sort of amused contempt. He was ignored as he went to his classes, as he participated in the unofficial worship of Melissa Tarfoot, the most pulchritudinous woman on campus.

(Melissa stood five feet ten. She had red hair, green eyes and a number of other attributes. She wore tight jeans with strategically-placed patches. She haunted Carmody's dreams).

Carmody was a good student, not from choice but from necessity. He had few distractions; his evenings were lonely ones. Out of boredom and frustration, he took to delving into libraries and archives. An enthusiasm possessed him for old, musty volumes and withered parchments lettered half in Latin, half in archaic English. On a hunch he began to search diligently among moldy scraps of antiquity for an answer to his problem. And on one day, spent amongst jumbled ancient books of incantations apparently intended for use in invoking the devil, he found it.

Turning crumbling leaves, scanning cryptic messages, he came at last to a page headed "an thou hast not that wych is beloved by ye laydys . . ." The directions for concocting a love philter were complicated, involving much use of blue lights and recitation of what seemed to be obscenities in medieval Latin. At the end was the customary warning, "Caveat factor" – let the maker beware. Enraptured, Carmody noted down instructions as fast as he could translate them.

It isn't necessary, or even decent, to describe the processes through which our hero went when he'd managed to obtain the various obscure ingredients required. It is enough to say that the result of his endeavors was a white, nacreous mess the smell of which was strong enough to gag a goat. This, he realized with horror, had to be taken internally. Oh, well. Compared with his own cooking, it wasn't really all that bad. Carmody washed down several tablespoons with a can of beer.

As if a mine had exploded in his stomach, Carmody's eyes popped and his tongue was on fire. Aargh! He gagged and quickly drank the rest of the beer. The explosion subsided as quickly as it had come, and Carmody, much shaken, went to bed.

He was still half-asleep the next morning when, burdened with his books, he left his car to walk across the campus parking lot in customary solitude. He recalled last night's startling experience; the memory made him shudder. How could he have been so foolish? It was purely by luck the stuff hadn't poisoned him.

A large shape crossed his side view. It was, he saw, the disturbing form of Melissa Tarfoot. An insane impulse came to him, and he did something he had never dared before. He looked straight at Melissa and said, "Hi there."

At first she stared blankly at him, as she might had a toad or lizard presumed to speak to her. Then (shatteringly) a smile raised her magnificent cheekbones. "Well, hi, there," she said warmly, putting her hand on his bony shoulder. "Who are you?"

Carmody was flabbergasted. "Well – I – uh– " Melissa wasn't listening. Her luminous green eyes were on him. "How come I never saw you before?" she asked.

"I don't know," he admitted.

She reacted by laughing as though he'd said something witty. "Oh, you're funny! Which way are you going? So am I! Let's walk together." Carmody stopped trying to speak. He recognized triumph. It had worked!

Melissa was not bothered that Carmody knew less than nothing about talking to girls. She did the talking, never taking her eyes off him.

In his first class Carmody's seat happened to be surrounded by women, in which sea of feminity he was usually as alone and unnoticed as if he had been on a deserted island. Today he was the center of adoration. Every girl within ten feet of him was as captivated as Melissa. Other women scattered about the room came to investigate, and they too fell to the influence of the ancient recipe.

As the day lengthened, so did the range of whatever attraction Carmody gave out. The sound of female voices, the touch of female hands, the light of female eyes, became his element. Carmody went about the campus in the middle of an ever-increasing whirl of attention. To anyone else it would have been aggravating, but to Carmody it was exhilarating. Several times he passed men who looked his way and frowned, once two who seemed to be watching him and muttering to each other, reactions he joyfully attributed to envy. At last, he felt, he was getting what he deserved. True, he wasn't entirely certain of what to do with it, but even that, he suspected, might be no problem. At least there was plenty of practice material.

But alas, even as pride and joy invested Carmody, his downfall was being prepared for him. The mouse, overjoyed with his newfound cheese, falls under the shadow of the unseen predatory cat; so it was with our hero. It hadn't occurred to him that any result so powerful must necessarily have a strong reaction, somewhere.

His final class usually bored Carmody; today his overflowing attractions were making it impossible to concentrate. He sat in the front of the room, smiling, basking in the undisguised love of every girl in the room. Carmody was making plans.

Suddenly the instructor looked up, sniffed the air. His face went wry. "What is that disgusting odor?" he asked.

"I don't know," volunteered a boy in the back of the room, "but it's been hanging around all period." Several other men grumbled agreement.

"I don't smell anything," said the girl nearest Carmody.

"Well I do!" exclaimed the instructor angrily. He pointed accusingly at Carmody. "And it's coming from you, you repulsive little creep! What are you, some kind of queer, that you've got to wear perfume?" Carmody, shocked from his dreams, let his jaw drop.

"Yes!" cried the instructor, advancing with reddened face. "You slob!" The other male members of the class got up. All came belligerently at Carmody. The scowls he'd been getting all day took on a new and terrifying context. Very quickly, he was out of his seat and at the door . . .

"Don't let him get away!" bellowed the instructor. "Get him!" yelled the men. They rushed at Carmody, who fled.

"Hey, wait," called Melissa Tarfoot. She joined the chase, followed by a swarm of other women. "Don't go away, we love you!"

Carmody wasn't sure what had gone wrong, but the results were only too obvious – while the old recipe did a great job of making women love him, it also made men hate him. And how! The words "caveat factor" swam into his mind . . .

More and more people pursued Carmody – girls trying to get near him, men trying to damage him. Out into the air he panted, barely ahead of a noisy mob of men and women rapidly gaining on him. Somebody hit him on the side of the head. "NO!" screamed Melissa Tarfoot, athletically mashing his assailant. "Let him alone – he's mine!"

"Get the little –!" howled the men. "Save him!" shrieked the women. Carmody panted this way and that, surrounded by an incredible scene. By now an enormous crowd roiled about, male and female students swinging, kicking, lustily slugging each other.

Someone kicked Carmody's knee, and he went down. On top of him thudded bodies, flailing arms, thrashing legs –

When the riot police broke it up and the reporters got there, they discovered nothing but a few gory buttons. Melissa Tarfoot treasures them to this day, even though she never knew their former owner's name.

*Flick Mager*

Oh, man –
You are hard.
Try as I might, I cannot reach you.
My advance attacks, earnest though they are,
Are ignored,
Or fled –
I'm having trouble deciding which is worse.
. . . it's scarey, for every poem I ever
wrote for anyone –
I lost them.
I rebuke myself for endangering you;
yet, somehow the words tumble down
unhushed . . .

I hate to explain my poetry.
I write what I feel.
If I wanted to explain what I felt, I would have talked,
but I didn't.
I wrote a part of me that has no words.
I didn't want a reason for writing:
I wanted it said, and out of me –
Like a demon exorcised
Or an angel, shared.

*Lynne Jones*

## DEATH OF A CHILD CROSSING THE STREET

Oh I'm cold

I remember that day
not long ago
I turned and looked
that car
I remember that car

I turned and looked
I was hit
the ground was cold
that road
I remember that road

I could hear the scream
of the driver
as she rushed to me
that arm
I remember that arm

I saw a policeman
come my way
he knelt down by me
that blanket
I remember that blanket

I then saw my father
and mother
as they came to my side
that crying
I remember that crying

I then saw nothing
nor a sound
a star said the end
Domini, why so young
that death
I remember that death

I then touched a door
made of gold
it opened to me
that face
I remember that face

I am gone, but will return
for I died
a child
crossing the street
and the death of a child
is the worst
there is.

*Christopher M. Wagner*

## KEEPING YOU IN MIND

Fields of green
making herb tea
painting your picture
which has already
been painted by you
Red bird flying
high over head
gazes down
upon the land, and you
which has alredy been done
by his mate
and I sit
looking at you
wondering
how I could
say hello to you
but, you don't look
my way
and U get up
from my seat
and leave
keeping you
in mind

*Christopher M. Wagner*

## WHAT IS AND WILL NEVER BE

I know which is and which is not
My mind tells me the not is
And the is isn't

Am I in space or am I a rock?
Do words come from lips
Or is this just the wind?

Am I moving now or have I stopped?
Can I be here or have I made it there?
Did I have what is and will never be?

Am I a life or just a death?
Can people see me or do I just think?
Am I here . . . Am I really here?

Will I be born or will I die?
Have I lived or hasn't my time come
To even live yet?
What is and will never be.

*Christopher M. Wagner*

## COMFORTLESS COVERS

The discomfort, uneasiness
And hollow pain of the aloneness
I feel now
As I undress and remove my jewelry,
Cross always being last to go, sometimes
not at all
Makes me speculate whether
The feelings will become more tolerable
Or aching
When I have bared myself to the world
And then retreated to bed
Seeking the comfort of the covers
Which isn't so much
They only touch, they can't feel
And they don't tell of tender emotions
Or convey passion
They're totally passive
And unaware
I desire you.

*Laurie Rouse*

## AN UNREQUITTED LOVE

moon lanterns light the street
and glowing flecks
play hide-n-seek in the dark shadows
yes, the heavy darkness till remains
but rays of hope
carried on spectrums of light
are finally beginning to pierce the darkness

my world was not always as forlorn
once, the light of day glimmered so brightly
the heart could not
contain all the moments
and the shimmering brilliance
of each new morning
intertwined my existence with splendor

those were the yellow days of love
the light of my whole life died
when his love was done.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

## "A LETTER FROM A DYING MOTHER"

Hello my people. I am writing you this letter to inform you of my health as it pertains to you as well as me. I have become very ill and weak due to much abuse over the long span of my life and now ever so much. You're cloging my blood vessels and killing my colls with atrocious mixed chemicals of my body which you cannot do if the body is to survive. You're burning my eyes of blue so much that at times I cannot see. And now my eyes are about to die for the germ has taken over its purity. You also leave scars on my skin with your bombs and bullets. My blood pressure rises almost to its peak of bursting when you test my combined power to my structure. It pains me when you reach deeper and deeper for my oil which I have almost exausted only to use it as a means of destruction. As I die – you die. So tell me one last thing before I bid farewell. Why do you call me Mother? For I'm sure you love your Mother. But tell me – would you kill her?

Love,

Mother Earth

*Walter Davis*

## PSALMS OF LOVE

Innocent is the heart of one
who has never loved at all

Tender is the heart of one
when love begins to call

Happy is the heart of one
who sees love as a beautiful dream

Sad is the heart of one
when finding love isn't as it seems.

Jealous becomes the heart of one
who is trapped by loves bewitching sensation

Broken becomes the heart of one
when dealing with loves companion

Fragile becomes the heart of one
who is mending from loves terrible pain.

Cautious becomes the heart of one
when knowing that love can hurt again.

*Martha Dixon*

For what, my younger brother-friend.
Do you seek so long and hard?
O'er burning black of asphalt paved,
Through cool sands of the shore.
Your restless guest for something lost,
Or is it something gained?
I know your need,
I felt it once,
And now I know, myself.

*Gary Robinson*

## SEPARATE CITIES

We live in our own worlds
Separated by distance great.
Still our minds touch
Your picture smiles at me.
But it doesn't see me smile back.

We go to bed in separate cities.
United in our dreams
Still we make love.
Your picture smiles at me.
But it doesn't see my cry.

*Laurie Rouse*

## A DAY IN VIENNA

I'm lonely for you
Especially now, on the bus
And walking down Viennese streets
Looking in little shop windows.
I miss your gentleness
And sensitivity
The way you're sorry
For things you can't help
And your smile
But more than anything else
I miss not being able
To be there
With you, when you can't smile
And have forgotten
What happiness is.

*Laurie Rouse*

## SECOND THOUGHTS

I still remember
a tall, swift-moving thinker
whose sense and speech were dry and clean
as a winter wind.

Much like an ember
was he: dark to the outside
but then within red fire, unseen
by most he met.

How describe to you
the secret tender brilliance
that lived beneath wide umber eyes
and sardonic smile?

Seldom one saw through
his apparent disregard –
yet then, an inner flame would rise
and light his face.

Now there is not much
left for me but memories
of joy and laughter; solemn times
of soul-inspecting –

Moonlight walks and such.
Where dead leaves scrape the sidewalk
I scuffle, and recall the rhymes
he used to quote.

*Flick Mager*

*Nancy Craig*

## EQUILIBRIUM

The vectors
That inflate
The continuum
of life force
that is me . . .
At times
ooze
Too slowly
To fill
The rooms of
The facade
I build . . .
And then
Soaring vaults and
Flying buttresses
Scarcely contain
The expanding megatons
Flowing over
The parapets . . .

*lefferly*

I wonder why?
but keep this to myself,

The thoughts before my mind grow weary
The darkness rushes like the wind to fill the world,
But still the thoughts echo and grow
like tornados in the dark
And questions arise as mountains in the wind,
But I do not question, pause, or speak.
As my thoughts travel through my mind -

I grow sleepy -
Then laughter comes,
Followed by dew filled eyes,
The world awakens -
And as the sun kisses the horizon,
A tranquil day ascends and fills me with new thoughts -

I wonder why? -
but keep this to myself.

*Pam Walter*

## SPRING

and so
the retreat of solstice
merges
with uneasy anticipation
of equinox . . .
the climb upward
steepens
against my
measured step.
and I drag
myself
behind me
hoping to catch up
to
me . . .

*leff erly*

long, slender strokes
upon the canvas.
the paintbrush hesitates
as you steadily gaze at me.
a unique revelation
when the painting is complete.
those inner feelings –
    locked tightly inside you
    will unknowingly
    find their way onto the canvas.
my confidence reassures me
    of your love
and this I expect will be portrayed
    as you gently weave
    the strokes of your painting
into one unified masterpiece.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

## GRANDFATHER FORGOTTEN OR LOVE IN THE SUNDAY MATINEE

in a movie by himself he sat
someone's grandfather forgotten
and i had to take a second look
(it's impolite to stare)

there was one tear
falling slowly down his cheek
as he sat there reminiscing,
popcorn bag in hand

he was staring at the picture screen
reliving all his days of youth
never seeing butch cassidy ride
or the technicolor sun

i watched him for five minutes
( i missed the bedroom scene)
he never moved or blinked an eye
throughout the double feature

i fell in love in a picture show
with butch cassidy and age
and someone's grandfather forgotten.
the price of love is high these days

it costs a dollar-fifty
(and a quarter for the popcorn)

*Sarah George*

You don't need a companion
nor a lover or mate –
only a computerized robot
using punch cards for:
    dullifeless replies
        dullifeless sex
Oh, but do please yourself!
After all,
that's the way the game is played.
Never mind;
Games are for children,
    and I, long ago, gave up my innocence.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

## APOLOGY

When I see you,
My life becomes
Luxurious . . .
It seems that you are mind incense,
Carried to me
On the day.
If my presence offends you,
And I see you look away . . .
If it were possible
I could leave
And disturb you no more,
The disorder that I am
Would be
Gone . . .

*leff erly*

## REFLECTIONS

I am a mirror.
And I reflect the portion of reality
That passes in front of me.
As you look into me,
You see yourself,
And are afraid.
I am the mirror surface come to life.
I am a mirror of multidimension.
In me you see yourself in more dimensions than two.
You look in me and you see you.
You see greed,
And lust,
And joy,
And trust,
And the son of a bitch that you are.
You can't love me,
Because I reflect you.
You hate me,
And fear me,
And still you don't know why.
Look in a mirror,
And see the mirror that is you.
Be aware of the reflection
That reflects the reflections
OF billions of mirrors
That die and never live.

*leff erly*

## ODE TO A FOOL

the snowscape between us
froze over one night
stark white and barren
but virgin no more

you huddle close to your
cave in the east
you bring fire and meat
to your woman

I remain in the west
my pallet's grown orange
but I no longer run
to keep warm

the icescape between us
turns to blood with the sun
stretches onward and onward
and melts.

*Judith*

(donricky)

oh lady oh
so fragile and genteel
weave of silvery spider design
crystal strings of beads . . .

but
my god
so strong

*Judith*

## Memories
(To "Neissy")

Been sitting here just picking daisys in the sun
The day seems quite long, but it's really just begun.
I just thought that I would put down into words
How lonesome life is being free as the birds.
Just a few weeks ago, it was then that you said
You wished to be free to try someone else instead.
What could I have done but to break down and cry
You held me in your arms as you whispered goodbye.

Remember how timid I was when I first held your hand
And how excited you were when I bought that Ragedy Ann?
And all those pillow fights and the times we went to the zoo
I guess it was sometime in between when I fell in love with you.
We would walk the beach at night and pick daisys in the day
I remember all the fun and teasing and the flat tires in the rain.
I remember your cute little nose and those beautiful brown eyes
And the way I would comfort you if you ever began to cry.

We had plans of being together someday, you and I
With a little house of our own beneath the Northern sky.
We would keep each other warm in the cold of the winter
And have a son, his name, that of Christopher.
You know, it's a little bit sad, how fate has its way
How all our hopes and dreams will eventually fade away.
What a waste it seems, all the times we spent alone
All the plans we made and the hours on the phone.

But the memories will remain there, deep within my heart
Next to a love I know will never part.
And one of these days, with a daisy enclosed
I think I'll write you a letter saying "I miss you so."

*Larry Robinson*

## LIVING WITH NATURE

Nature and I go hand in hand. We both think of living and prospering far. We think of gentle loftly touch.

She thinks of giving me warmth and soft cool air,
I think of planting her root; watching her grow,
and eating her grain.

I love her, and she loves me, and if such love warms the soul and grows a roseso beautiful, how could we ever hurt one another?

*Walter Davis*

EMPTY IS THE NOTHING OF WITHOUTNESS
THE INVISIBLE PALL
THE SKELETAL SHROUD WHOSE BREEZE BLOWS STALE ON LINEN
TOO CRISP FOR LYING.
THE FLAT SAIL'D GULL OF ETERNITY'S LAUGHTER
TINKLE TINKLING AT THE BOTTOM OF A MARBLE BASIN'S
SEWAGE DRAIN AS IT RISES TO DROWN THE
VIBRATIONS OF A STAR IN WEARY DARKNESS
AND NEVERMORE FELT NOTES OF SUBLIME JOY.
A ROTTED ORB STILL POSTED TO RING IF STRUCK BY HANDS
WITHOUT FEELING THE MECHANICAL CLOSE
TOUCH OF WISPY PAST GONE FOREVER ONLY
A MOMENT OF REASONLESS SOLITUDE COULD
FORTIFY THE FIRELESS INTENSE HEAT OF
IMMENSE MOUNTAINS OR PRAIRIE SNOW
ON BIRD PRINTS TURNING THE EARTH
TO WATER SALT AND DITHYRAMBIC HEMORRHAGE.

*Richard McMonogle*

"The Guidance"

Do not miss loves touch, but only wait for its guidance.
Do not feel distressed because loves rapture has not bonded
you within its womb, for love cannot enter a soul in misery
for depression only turns loves wings the other way therefore
leaving you to wait another season until its return.

To admit defeat is to defeat yourself, for you are the very
essence of love, as well as its anguish.

Love not to love only, but yourself as well.
Do not desire love itself, but also desire yourself. And in
the absence of loves womb, love yourself and with this love a seed will
grow in the presence of yourself and bond itself in the womb of
love and someday give birth to a new and everlasting love.
And through this you may love and four seasons of the year
and fly your own destiny.

*Walter Davis*

## Early Spring Sunday

Standing in a pasture
watching the clouds,
the horses,
the wind;
Moving across the emotions
of the field,
the animals . . .
and you.
Feeling all the beauty
caressing my mind,
the grass,
the manes;
Forming a portrait
of streaming blonde hair
from me,
the horses,
. . . and you.

*Lin Harper*

## Tuesday Nite At Home

Depression is deep
Thoughts are dry
dusty
muddled
Blowing from side to side
restless
heavy with tears
Yet not falling
And not lightening
Just remaining depressed
to the point
of sleep

*Lin Harper*

It comes from me as a prayer sometimes . . .
(love me.)
And when the nights are empty of light or feeling . . .
(love me, somebody.)
There comes a small cry from inside my heart . . .
(love me, somebody – please.)
But the cry shatters only the silence of my room . . .
(love me, somebody.)
It never touches another person's thoughts . . .
(love me.)

*Lin Harper*

You could make a woman think
of past loves
and treasures
. . . pains
She feels each sensation new again
all the glorious ecstasies
so right
. . . so wrong
And it hurts when she realizes
how much she wants
to be with you
. . . and live again
And it's you this time, that pulls her
in many directions
of right and wrong
. . . yet so desirable
Give this woman a chance to strengthen
her will
and love
. . . perhaps for you

*Lin Harper*

## Death Paves A New Way

Time does move your life to death
All your life your knowledge seemed repressed
You never gained your rightful place
Only sneers and yells disgrace
The slums, bumbs, and rancid food only added to the mood.

Well founded hate for all mankind,
I dare to say no one can find
But confidence and helping hands are always there;
Although, concealed behind latched doors and rich mans ties.

Turn to god,
They say he's there
Although miracles are not for you to share.
Faith and love shall fill you soul
Food baskets will complete the whole.

Be resolved accept the site that tour redeemer deemed is right
You were born to needy folk with yet a bit of food to share
They say shine love, peace, not despair
Your time shall come
Oh, yes some day
I've heard death paves a brand new way.

*Thomas Paul Signer*

## To a Married Couple

The seed is left upon the Earth
Its growth is spawned by showers;
Till stalk, than limb, than leaf, and bud all bring about a flower.

Through prospective ills or tantrum squalls
Loves joy shall be resounded;
And in the eyes of all mankind companionship You've founded.

Not as two as was before
The World you had to conquor;
But one, yet two, till life is through;
Your love from seed, to bud has flowered.

*Thomas Paul Signer*

I would rather,
That people think me stupid
And allow reality to disappoint them;
Than allow reality,
To confirm their hypothesis.

*Thomas Paul Signer*

## Winter Time and Love

Walking through the town
With people all around
No one seems to notice that I'm here
Snow is drifting down
And settling on the ground
Telling me that winter time is near

Waiting on the street
A place for us to meet
We'll have some time before we have to go
Walking through the park
When everything is dark
And loving you whenever we're alone

It's getting very cold outside
I'd better take you home
If no one's there when we arrive
We'll spend some time alone

In front of crackling fires
With deepest hearts desires
Reaching down I touch you once again
Lying on the floor
I want you even more
Seems winter time and love go hand in hand

*David Fechtmeyer*

## The Salgoth Prithy Mory

A person you can see at times
But only if you look there
With flashing rainbows in her eyes
And golden locks of long hair

A poem that doesn't make much sense
With lions slowly steaming
You look to sea and find the key
But slowly lose the meaning

When words so near become unclear
In digital computors
A friend of mine will a tyme
To give the ulster looter

You cannot know the meaning of
The salgoth Prithy Mory
The cur of Bal Sagoth can talk
But cannot tell the story

The servant of the pagan king
Is off to see his sun
The wild cat is running fast
His battle must be won

A love so true for Baby Blue
Will finish up the story
And terminate a greeting to
The Salgoth Prithy Mory

*David Fechtmeyer*

## PORCUPINE

Well, damned if I'm not in love with a porcupine.
And it's alright as long it's nothin' but roses and wine.
She just eats the roses as fast as she can,
And sucks down that wine, drinkin' by the pan.
And sits back fat,
That's where it's at.
But, sooner or later, there ain't no more wine,
And I gotta get close to that porcupine
And sooner or later I know that I will
Turn over screamin, stuck full of quills.
Now, I'm a hacker, I take it by the mile,
And givin' up and quitten' – just ain't my style,
But I'm gettin' tired of puttin' up with the pain
Of always gettin' stuck, come shine or rain.
She's stickin' me too often and that's a pure fact.
It'd be different if I had it comin' or somethin' I lacked,
But as hard as I try . . .
I don't understand why.
Well, damned if I shouldn't try my luck
With a rabbit – least I wouldn't get stuck.

*lefferly*

## Life's Little Inconsistencies

Do you believe in Genesis or Evolution?
Need change come about through violent revolution?
Is progress synonymous with ugly pollution?
Will conservation be a total solution?

Communist subversion colors the world red,
while freedom keeps the starving fed.
Non-believers shout "God is dead!"
while Jehovah Witnesses spout their doomsday dread.

Is there hypocracy in Democracy?
Or idealism in Communism?
Is there hypocracy in theocracy?
Or idealism in hedonism?

Religion preaches of heaven, hell, and save the soul.
Philosophy teaches truth of life, while death takes its toll.
Psychology reaches deep to probe id, ego, and psyche's role.
Morphology lends speeches on organic life as a whole.

Specifically, are U.F.O.'s merely pranks or science-fiction?
Do you even half-believe Jean Dixon's predictions?
How does medicine conquor human disease and affliction?
Why is there rampant alcohol and drug addiction?

Satinist cluts and witchcraft extollers
live beside Jesus Freaks and Holy Rollers.
Yogists, joggers, and Adelle Davis followers
exist among charlatans, con-men, and cajolers.

Is the root of evil money, society, sex, or a sourcer's hex?
Must prejudice, racism, and war continue to perplex?
What causes high divorce rates and much mental vex?
Why so many homosexuals and debauched human wrecks?

Explain the increase in crime, child abuse and juvenile delenquency.
And the fact that suicide occurs with such frequency.
Confusion, contrariness, and much inconsistency,
Gross injustice in law and flagrant militancy.

Does it all seem meaningless and quite contradictory?
Life's jigsaw puzzles culminate ultimately in mystery.
Can automation and computers pitted against Nature achieve victory?
This question will be pondered until the end of life and history . . .

*Kathleen C. Hill*

# A DAY SPENT CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING IN THE MAINE WOODS

It was beautiful that day. A cold wind smacked my cheeks and a glow soon appeared upon them. I went far into the forest where the loudest sound that could be heard was the noise of my skis breaking through the crusty snow.

All was peaceful, there in the Maine woods. The naked birch trees stretched their icy fingers as far as they could reach, contrasting their colorlessness with the brilliant blue of the sky. My heart told me, "Look, look! Soon all this will be gone from your grasp!" I stopped skiing for a while and tried to soak in the beauty and calm of this quiet world, so different from my own.

Far below me, to my right, ran the partially frozen Carrabassett River. A waterfall poured into a deep emerald pool at its base. Eddies swirled in its greeness, freezing into circles, which in turn whirled around until freezing together at its bank.

On my left, Little Poplar Mountain rose above the trees. Leafless hardwoods formed a lattice-work across its slopes broken here and there by spruce and pines, heavily laden with snow. In one place there was a large verticle rectangle of white where a ski jump thrust its humanity on the mountain's virginity.

I skiied farther through the woods, enjoying my aloneness until it was disturbed when, far ahead, I saw a doe nibbling on some dried grasses. Slowly I skiied up to her, so as not do disturb her. She heard me, however, and lifted her head, ears cocked and nose guivering. She saw me and we stared at each other for a moment, an hour. It was as if she understood me and I, her.

This delicate creature then moved towards me and, in a daze, I put my hand out to welcome her. Closer still she came until, bending her head over my palm, she licked my hand with her warm, velvety tongue. Both of us were, for that second, children of the wilderness, dependent on nature for survival. I had found my daemon, my kindred spirit. I had become one with the doe, the trees, the mountains, and the rivers.

After looking at me once more my deer turned and fled. However I was not sad at her leaving, but instead calm, alive, and very happy. The vestiges of a life of tension lay at my feet like broken egg shells. My soul had gone through a renaissance of peace after years of searching for it.

It was time to return home. The sun hung low in the sky, appearing to rest on the summit of Bigelow Mountain. My trip back was a quick one and soon I began to see traces of human habitation. I skiied faster and faster because the warm day was turning into a very cold night. The sun dipped behind Bigelow and the sky was washed with gold and pink – a fitting tribute to a glorious day.

Ahead of me I saw our camp, smoke curling from its chimney. The warm glow radiating from the windows seemed to welcome the tired and hungry skier gliding up its driveway. I had shared a wonderful day with a forest and a deer, but I felt a need for the human companionship that awaited me inside the house. I removed my skiis and carefully brushed the snow off of them. Then, glancing back once more at the now darkened woods, I went inside.

*Lauren Thatcher*

debbie marion

class sturcture/or i'm sorry it had to happen

a one time omnipotent being
has fallen
into another lowly place
and now moves mechanically
along with the others
who too had their omnipotent times.

*Sarah George*

As the faceless faces cry to me
And I no longer weep
The jack knife smiles
Sweet dreams beguile
Sleep is no longer sleep
Voices speak in silence
Dry is the forzen rain
The needle punctures easily
And with it goes the pain.
Words of clear obscurity
Echo in the cave.
"Come with me" says Lucifer
"There's nothing left to save."
"Have you seen your sweet sad prince?
He's lying on the floor."
"I will not follow you." I say.
As we leave through the door.
Leonardo cries aloud
"It's crucifixion time!"
Crosses pierce the midnight sky
With energy sublime.
Angel dust is in the air
Horse gnashes at his bit
The unpure white snow in me despairs
And I take another hit.

*Lawrence Thatcher*

a ray of light -
indistinguishable -
and, smaller than a quick glance,
passes me by.

Yet -
it calls to me
and gives me hope
to cherish and hold
as the sun bursts forth

and then without a warning it fades,
leaving only the memory to cater
to its whims.

*Pam Walter*

The Ghost Ship of Peace

Lines of blue
Reflections of light
A silver gray mass
On a crimson moon night
The water is cold
The sea gives a roar
And the ghost ship of Peace
Can be seen from the shore

Her flag proudly raised
To the top of her mast
Her decks are abandoned
As in ages past
Her rotting old hulk
Floating dead on the sea
Still waits to be found
By someone like me

And though men have searched
But to no avail
The ship sails on
While man lives in hell

Through disaster and famine
And wars being fought
The Ghost Ship of Peace
Has yet to be caught
And though men have searched
But to no avail
The ship sails on . . . . . .

*David Fechtmeyer*

Warrior.

Foul, shrieking winds tore through the dark, black wood.
The huddled rider felt the Furies pull his cloak,
Sharp, claw-like fingers from the trees tugged at his hood;
The Weavers of his destiny used skeins of blood.
The Tempest-Bitches changed their key; the weather worse.
Snowflakes struck like porcelain chips against his face.
The wearied rider sighed and clung onto his horse,
A moan broke from his lips, he tumbled hard into the moss.
For hours he lay quite still, as death upon the ground,
Unaware of three black shapes that came to see his form;
They came from out the woods without a sound.
And now they stood like frozen ghouls about him round.
One swiftly raised an axe to cleave the stranger's head,
The prone one woke and stiffly grasped his sword.
A zephyr's flight! The blade it flashed a path of red.
Two fiends sprang back, but one fell dead.
A wave of now! A thud of earth! The warrior gained his feet.
The last two demons gripped thier weapons hard.
The stranger swung his steel, and carved two arcs of heat.
Two pairs of hands grasped headless necks, down crashed two hulks of meat.
The stranger gasped and caught his breath, then turned to face the trees.
He sheathed his bleeding sword and staggered forward.
The murky trees began to swim, and he sank to his knees.
He hit the ground as The Deathless Hosts watched from the breeze.

*A. Lee*

## A SOMEONE

Waking up
        to an overcast morning
Finding myself
        still alive to the world.
Alive and Alone.
The emptiness
        quickly reminds me of your absence.
I wish I could follow you –
        follow you along your journey of endless questions.
But you are searching
        along an opposite road;
My destiny
        leads me in another direction.
We cannot hold each other back –
        back from that mystic searching which is characteristic of youth.
Both of us
        will learn to struggle alone,
Hoping that somewhere,
                somehow,
We will each meet a someone
        whose life points in the same direction.

*Barbara Throckmorton*

## STONE

"Stone, you are what makes people so cold,
they seem not to care: They've been abused like you;
Thrown out of the way and pushed aside, Stepped on.
You gave people this attitude; Cold and Hard.
Impenetrable to all circumstances. You just can't get through
anymore. Just like the water has washed over you, people
have been getting worn from ill usage. They have lost
all emotion. Some no longer feel joy nor sorrow; Cry when
sad; Nor laugh when happy. Everyone is an introvert."
Till one day they get dropped and shatter
to pieces and expect sympathy, but do not get it because
others have not yet been dropped so hard, and are still one
piece; Cold and Hard.
"You Stone, yes you, have instilled this
bitter, hard, Nothingness."

*Cheryl Fraser*

## FIRST FAMILY

The airy roar of ocean waves hitting on hard-packed
Multibillion grains of sand ( as if pounding on a wall to gain
admission)
Calls – and seabirds answer.
They are wary of this human interloper.
They watch with appraising eye,
Knowing what to expect.
But I surprise the gull; I surprise the nimble-footed sandpiper.
I am still and silent.
I am one with the wind;
I am kin to the ocean – my blood pounds:
Pulsating in answering rhythm to the ocean's call.
Gulls cry questions at me, but I am still.
Curiously, they venture forward, pretending not to stare.
They let their young blunder into my path in search of food.
They wink in concealed acknowledgement of my existence.
A feeling long neglected by my species enters by breast.
This is my home; my peace.

*Lynne Jones*

the love of my life
his heart in a bower
of thorns grown wild,
broke lose,
and he's gone.

his heart in a bower
cut loose when he saw her,
made her his flower
it's they and they're gone
. . . and I'm glad.

for what was is not
what's real doesn't matter
what is is what was
but it isn't, not now,
and he's gone and I'm glad.

*Judith*

Awakening Child

Early morning darkness
finds me lying like a child,
my hand clutching hers.
Now for the first time
I need someone,
I never felt so helpless.
Soft warm breath
touching my neck,
tells me she sleeps.
I want to slip outside
and scream at those staring stars
soundlessly swimming in frigid space.
Stuck fast to deep black night,
they coldly glitter,
and watch us fleeting mortals play out our roles,
But they have never known in their ageless lives
one seond of the passion that I have felt,
nor been touched by the love inside
each day I see her face.

**********

And when the sun has bleached the sky,
A million stars will quickly die,
Spells are shattered in their breaking,
As mine begins with her waking.

*A. Lee*

i regret to say
that you have become
like the weather
in my conversations
and isn't it a shame?
that there is no more forecasting?
one always knows when to expect
sunshine
or rain . . .
even on a saturday.

*Sarah George*

## SILENT THE STARS

Far down the roadway the gospel is calling,
i read my name on the infinite page;
i feel the frame of existence is falling
slowly the curtain uncovers the stage.
i ran the last mile on roads of palm branches,
she looked at me and enfolded my mind;
our juxtaposition was most advantageous,
with dream in dream i whispered "now it is time"

i sang the fantastic beauty of atoms,
calling out loud to a point out in space;
i asked again . . . the eternal question . . .
silent the stars in her beautiful face

Allah, Lord God, Buddha, Krishna, Jehovah,
these were the names of the power that is;
i found my mind in a whirlpool confusion,
the Presence kept saying "the answer is this!"
i gave up and floated face-down through emotion,
dreaming and scheming on how to survive;
my brain turned to ashes and my spirit stagnated,
just who thought that i would come through it alive?

i shouted the blackest torment of aloneness
projecting frustration from my tiny place
pleading once more . . . the one cosmic question . . .
silent the stars in her glorious face.

vaguely aware of a light shining dimly
signal: the end of the tunnel for me?
i stood up and looked out . . . then set my jaw grimly
if this was the end, well i'd just have to see . . .
setting my course on a spiritual star-fix
i thrust out and launched myself into deep sky
not knowing a fragment of space metaphysics . . .
i knew there was light and i had to know why.

galaxies flew in perpetual motion
fate and my future were running a race
light speed warp whining that incessant question
silent the stars in that marvelous face

at the corner of earshot a splinter of cornets
hailing with hope the still brightening light
suddenly cloudscapes like swarms of bright hornets
parted: raw radiance burned, blinding my sight
from all – where the matchless display of the heavens
had contacted my naked soul . . . proven too much
now death's icy fingers in sixes and sevens
probed deep into ego with cold clammy touch

i'd finally got through but was wrecked in the process
shouting those words through the pain of my pace
i screamed defiantly the only question
silent the stars in her heavenly face

sharply recalling the maiden's lone sentence
the meanings of questions . . . the questions of whys
my soul doubled over in prayerful repentance
the ghost of a glimmer it shot 'cross my eyes.
crescendo of colour . . . my vision then whole
and suddenly it seemed as if i'd always known
to live without love is to live without soul
to live without God is forever alone

visions of splendor then carried me skyward
rejoicing in showers of soul-saving grace
i laughed and asked how many others would join me
Silent the stars . . . the omnipotent face

frightened and dazed i inquired once more . . . frantic . . .
how easy it might be to get to this place
and how many people would stand there beside me
silent . . . still silent the stars in that face

then, suddenly heavens were rocked by the thunder
of billions of trumpets . . . a universe high
doors were kicked open and walls burst asunder
as the sons of mankind reached the edge of the sky
it seemed that in ending we'd made the right choices
destined to glory in vast realms of light
chorusing grandly, those bright angel voices
celebrate ever the ending of night.

i called out once more before joining the others
"what stories the glories in store for our race?"
the holy one merely looked down at me, smiling
silent the stars in her beautiful face.

*David Drummond*

## Impressions from the Moor.

Came crisp Christmas morning
I trudged up the hill to the snowy moor-top, to be alone.
The sky ceiling looked close enough touch;
A moody, brooding grey.
The clouds were like waves, sliding and rippling along,
I could almost hear them.
But there were few sounds in that winter wilderness,
No trees for the wind to whistle through,
Instead it softly cried past my ears – a haunting sigh.
My boots pushed crackling through the snow crust
And settled in the softness beneath;
I sae myself from a distance,
A bundled elf lost on a vast meringue plain.
It could have been another planet, Northumbria, the ancient Celtic kingdom,
Constantly windswept, never conquered. The Roman's Ninth Legion
Disappeared just past here, no traces, no ruined nor rusted remains.
I felt the old phantoms, did they still drift across that desolation
So far from their sunny Italy?
A high-flying hawk screamed somewhere for its mate,
I was the only one to hear its sad cry.
Back in the narrow streets of the village,
I made my way home, my feet once more on slick stone slabs, not grass and snow.
Far above the smoking snoring roof-tops the moor still lurked,
Like a doorway to another time, still waiting for me to return.

*A. Lee*

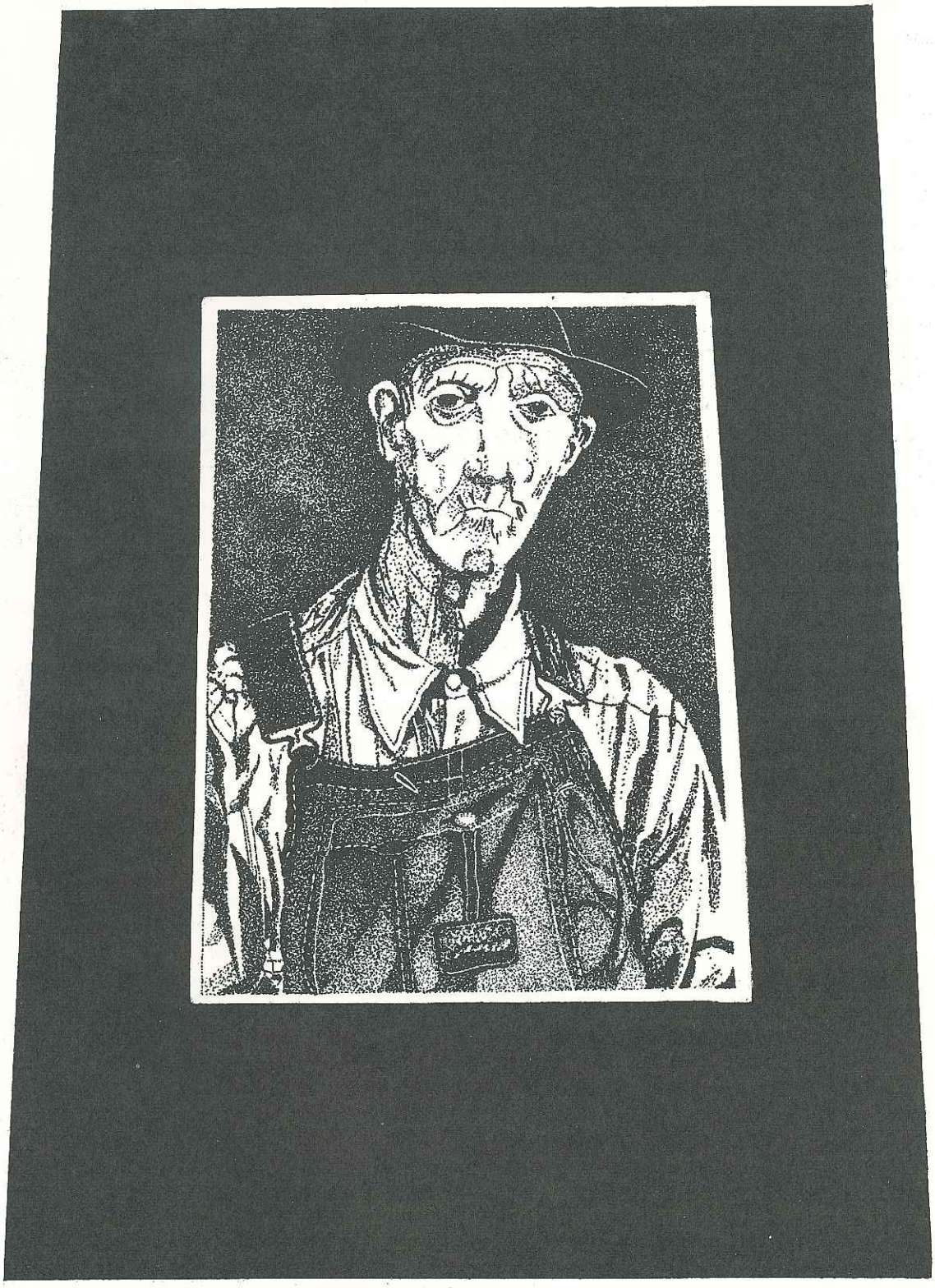
## LA VIE

The night surrounds me silently,
Its shadows linger past.
In mindless thought I wander through
The times that didn't last.
The periods of love and hate,
Of taking and of giving,
The tears, the laughter, and the doubt
So much a part of living.

Existence is a winding road,
For if you turn the bend,
The happiness you just grasped tight
Escapes away again.

But though the tears, the laughter
All these ups and downs persist,
I s uddenly realize that at least
I'm fortunate to exist.
For true, if I was not alive
No sorrow would I bear,
But of the many blissful days
I'd also lose my share.

*Linda Ryan*



*Edward Spong*

## THE FACE OF MADNESS

Robert Oliver was fifty, a professor of atomic physics, and a Nobel Prize winner. On that fateful day in June as he walked towards his lab complex, he remembered the day he undertook the project five years before, when the value of subatomic study by electron microscope was shown to be negligable because of the scan properties of the 'scope itself. Physicists needed something more precise, and before him was the solution.

The complex, essentially a high speed multiprogram computer coupled to special sensing instrumetns, when correctly adjusted and calibrated would, in theory, amplify the "light" of an atom, allowing men to observe things 300,000,000,000,000,000 times smaller than a water molecule. Man's first detailed look at the atom.

The previous weeks had involved the testing of the great range of "magnifications" the instrument displayed. From a fly's multi-faceted eye at ten power to a single gene in a chromosome chain at 100,000 power, each subject was represented in clear, sharp detail, both in the viewpiece and on film. Once the computer sequence has begun, all data and the operator's spoken observations are recorded on videotape.

Once inside the lab, part of a large research institute, the first sight that met his eyes was the receptionist, Anne Carver.

"Good morning, Dr. Oliver," piped the young woman cheerily.

"Good morning, Anne. Has the preliminary sequences begun yet?"

"Yes sir, they were begun about ten minutes ago. Is this the big day?"

"It is, indeed." He grinned foolishly at the thought. "We're going for total magnification today. Tomorrow we may have the answer to the subatomic composition of the atom, and the knowledge to create unimaginable new forms of inexpensive energy production! Maybe even the answer to an efficient propulsion method to explore the universe! Untold frontiers lie before us today, waiting to be explored. The heart of matter and energy will be laid open before us! It is possible that man is about to embark on a second, more complete 'Atomic Age!' "

"It's all Greek to me, doctor. I sometimes get confused trying to read a recipe for fudge brownies, let alone understanding what the atom is made up of!", she exclaimed with a small laugh, reaching to answer the phone. "It's the lab; the final sequence is ready for you to start."

"Thank you," he replied as he turned towards the door marked "OBSERVATION CONSOLE — Restricted Area." He and Dr. Roger Walker, head of the Institute, held the only keys to this door, specially equipped with a lock coded to the natural electrical resistance of the two men's bodies. Dr. Walker held a key for the express purpose that if anything happened to Oliver or the sequence, he could enter and terminate the experiment. Only from this room could the final sequence begin.

As he entered, closing the door behind him, he was greeted by a large panel covered with a multitude of meters,dials, lights, and in the center, like a cyclops eye, rested the viewpiece.

As he took his place at the controls, he pressed a button marked "Cnacel Communications", closing the room from all but special "red line" emergency calls. He enjoyed his privacy while conducting experiments. Whenever possible he carried out his experiments alone. This gave him peace and quiet to think about the data, and then make his deductions. But in this case he had ulterior motives for his solitude.

Carefully checking his instruments, he reached forward, poising his hand over a button labeled "Initiate". With a great feeling of personal accomplishment, he pressed firmly upon the button. He glanced at the wall clock, recording the exact time in his mind, even though the recording instruments had already done so at the instant he pressed the button. It was 10:10A.M.

The line printer connected to the computer banks began to chatter, printing out a statement:

********** SEQUENCE INITIATED **********

He leaned forward, placing his eyes to the viewpiece, with the thought that this might mean another Nobel Prize. This was his last coherent thought, as he looked into the face of ---------- madness.

The phone rang. Roger Walker looked up from his morning's work, glancing at his watch. 10:15 A.M. "Bob must be well into his experiment by now," he thought to himself as he reached for the desk phone.

"Superintendant's office, Dr. Walker speaking."

"This is Dr. Oliver's lab. Something has gone wrong inside the control room. Dr. Oliver will not answer the 'red line'. The sequence had stabilized, and then he broke the computer pattern. The equipment shut down automatically, but Dr. Oliver is still inside and won't come out. We think something has happened to him, we can hear him hollering and running about."

"I'll be right there," he said, halfway out of his chair. Thirty seconds later he was running from his office towards the lab.

. . . . . .

"Dr. Walker;" it was Anne Carver; "I think he's gone mad." The building was in utter chaos. "He's been screaming and pounding on the door." Her eyes had a look of hysteria in them.

"Sit down and calm down. Call the infirmary and have Dr. Roth come over with the ambulance."He could see she needed something to occupy her mind. "I'll open the control room. "Smith, Roberts;" two technicians were standing nearby, "come with me," he ordered as he turned towards the door, fumbling for the key.

The sound of the man's screams were the most disheartening and terrifying sound he had ever heard. As he placed the key in the lock, a wave of fear passed over him as he thought of what might greet his eyes when he opened the door.

"Smith, Roberts; take a side of the door and restrain him when I open the door. He sounds violent, so be careful. Don't hurt him if you don't have to."

As he turned the key, the door flew open and out rushed Dr. Oliver, only to be grabbed by the two technicians. They subdued the screaming, thrashing man by a concerted effort of themselves and the few people gathered about.

At the sight of his best friend, his once tidy suit and neatly combed hair now disheveled, lying upon the floor screaming incomprehensible syllables, with a wild look in his eyes, Walker was shaken to the core of his soul. To wonder what had caused this once stable, civilized and gentle human being, to become the fighting, bellowing animal before him brought additional anquish.

"Dr. Walker ---," He looked to the direction of the voice, just in time to catch Anne Carver before she fell to the floor in a dead faint. As he laid her gently on the floor, he could hear the sound of the ambulance over the screams of the insane man, thanking God for it's arrival.

Through the door burst an intense young man with tight-curled, flaming red hair, with two orderlies in hospital whites carrying a stretcher.

"Hold his arm tightly," ordered Dr. William Roth, fumbling in his bag for a hypodermic syringe. "I'm going to inject a sedative, then we'll take him to the hospital." As he bent forward to inject the sedative, the man on the floor began to writhe convulsively.

"Hold him tight," Roth stated as he injected Oliver, still twisting on the floor. "The drug will begin to take affect almost immediately." He turned to the two orderlies who had accompanied him.

"Take him straight to emergency. I want a complete series of tests run, but keep him under sedation. I'll be back there as soon as I get some information." To the technicians, now laying the drugged scientist on the stretcher, "Where has Dr. Walker gone?"

"I think he went into the control room," said the technician named Alberts, as he straightened up.

"Thanks," said Roth, turning towards the door. As he stepped inside he saw Roger sitting in the control chair, now a bare metal frame, the upholstery scattered about the room.

He was shutting down the panel, finally turning to see who came in.

"Oh, hello Bill," spoke Walker in a quiet voice. Roth detected a trace of a quiver in the otherwise unemotional voice of the Institute director.

"What happened, Roger? What could have caused this?"

"I don't know. Bob was taking the sequence to total magnification today. I can see nothing that could have caused it."

"Maybe he did."

"What?", queried Walker in a confused voice.

"I mean, maybe he saw something so confusing or horrible that it caused him to go mad."

"It could be. I'll keep it in mind. I'm going to convene an investigative board of directors meeting to study this." An even more sobering thought struck him. "I had better go over and see June Oliver and tell her what happened."

"She's a strong woman, Roger. I'm sure she can make it through this. If it hits her too hard, give her two of these." He pulled a bottle of pills from his case.

"Thank you." He then ushered Roth out, locking the door behind them. To Anne Carver;

"I want the data film delivered to my office in one hour. And I want all the directors there too. I'm going to break the news to June."

"Do you want me to come? One of the other secretaries can take care of calling the directors."

"No, I think I should do it myself. Anyway I want you here to make sure no word gets out to the press. It could ruin our chances for any further grants for this project. Bob would want the work continued."

She nodded understandingly, turning to the phone.

On the way to the Oliver home, twenty-minutes from the lab, Walker formulated and discarded idea after idea as to how to break the news to June Oliver. They had been married twenty-two-years, and to Walker they seemed to be the two happiest people he knew. It would be a greater blow to her than it was to him. He decided to play it by ear and when it came down to it, to be frank and not beat around the bush.

When he finally arrived at the Oliver's residence, a small, middle-class dwelling in a ten year old housing development, he was already feeling the affects of what he was going to have to say in the next few minutes. The walk to the door felt like the last mile to the electric chair.

Soon after his knock, a young looking, slightly greying woman answered the door. June Oliver's usually smiling face was clouded with a sort of solemn resolution.

"Hello Roger," Her voice was husky. She was greatly troubled. "I heard over the radio that an 'unexplained distrubance' had occured at the lab." "I know something has happened to Bob." Not once did her lips tremble. "Bob long ago thought that something might happen, and spent several hours one night compiling some notes of his. Come into the den. They're in his desk."

He followed her quietly into the den. "What could have brought such sufferings on such fine people," he thought to himself as she motioned him onto the couch, while reaching into a drawer.

She came back carrying a manila envelope, and sat down beside him. "Bob said if anything happened to him, I was to give you this."

As he opened the envelope, he found five pages written in Oliver's own hand. Looking at the first page, it began like a letter:

My Dear Friend and Colleague,

Since you are reading this, I may assume, most probably I am either dead or hopelessly insane, most probably the latter. I will later offer reasons for this choice and a possible explanation. This may also be considered my last will and testament.

As I know you well, you will already have called an investigation board, and these pages may hold the answer . . .

At this point he looked into the face of June Oliver, only to find tears in her soft, brown, eyes.

"What's happened to him, is he dead?" Her chin trembled. "No." Relief in her eyes. "But he's insane."

Anguish, horror, fear. All could be read in the face of June Oliver. In the next instant Walker found himself holding her, both crying over the loss of friend and husband.

Exactly one hour after he left, Dr. Roger Walker entered his office. Technicians were in the process of setting up the data film while the directors were busily engaged in muted discussion, but silence fell as he entered.

"Gentlemen, I have in my hand," he waved the envelope, "The answer to the cause of Dr. Oliver's," a pause, "insanity. I wish to read an excerpt from this document." He opened the envelope, extracting two sheets of paper. All in the room seemed to focus all their senses on what he would say. Walker scanned down the page, finding the passage, and began to read.

--- So, in correlating these facts I have come to these conclusions: because of the great ranges of the instrument, its design, and the steadily increasing magnifications, a sort of motion would be created forming an unbelievable spectrum of colors out of subatomic particles. These factors possibly, in fact, probably, would be more than any human mind could cope with, causing incurable insanity. Once the magnification stabilizes, there is no danger, nor above the more extreme magnifications.

Therefore, once the sequence stablizes at total magnification, or at any other, there is no danger. From my data, I have made a startling theoretical discovery. If you would play back the data tape from total magnification, you will make a most interesting discovery on your own.

Walker looked up, his "audience" still deep in thought. "It 's signed 'robert Oliver', and dated three months ago."

"Lets run the data tape," suggested Dr. Joseph Penton, an astronomer and a member of the board.

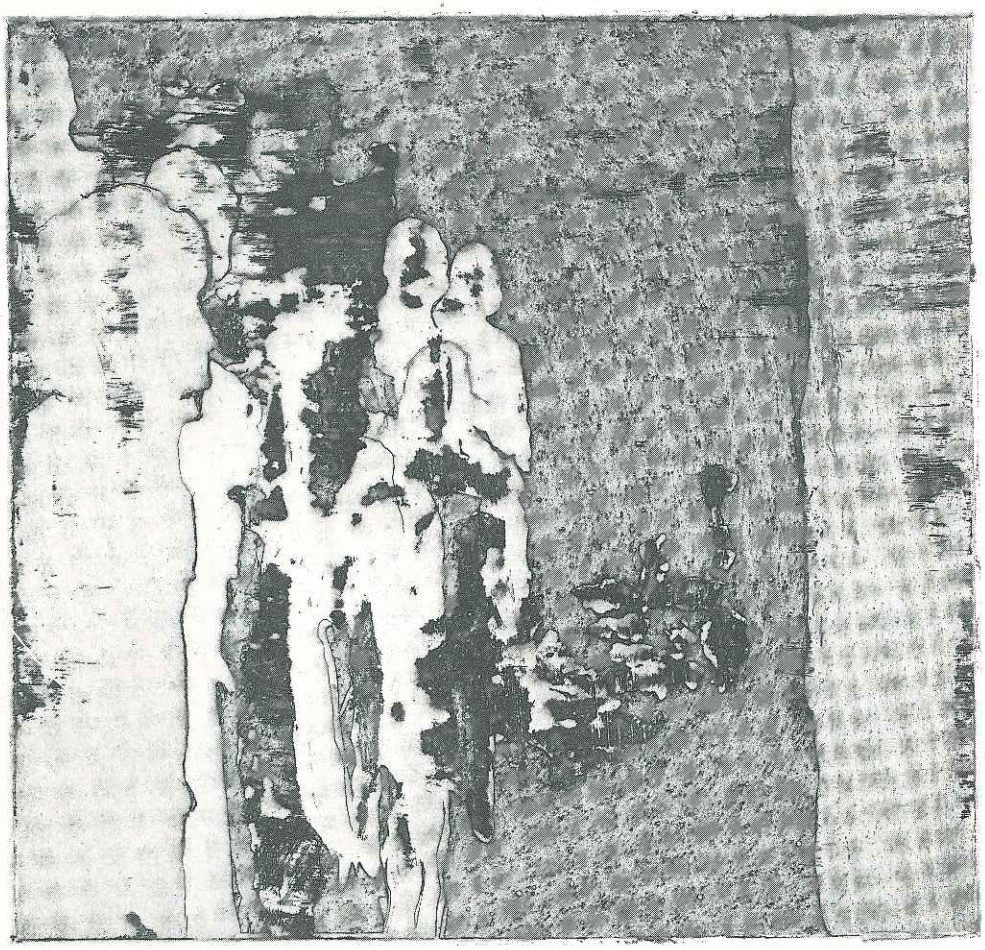
Walker stepped over to converse with the technicians. "Can you play only the final section, the part after total magnification?"

"Certainly, doctor. "He bent to the projector, running off several feet of videotape. "I've got it."

"Okay, run it." the lights went out.

A black area surrounded with white, the white filled with images of instrument faces, appeared on the screen. As the sequence stabilized, as recorded on tape, the picture became clearer, permeated with small pinpoints of light. A hugh, almost as though a miracle were about to happen, covered the room. The only sound was of the projector. Clearer and clearer the visual image became. Sharper became their attention, and more pointed the silence. Someone gasped, for there on the screen before them was the secret that Dr. Oliver had worked so hard to reveal. The secret contained within each "atom" of our existance, Another Universe.

*Gary Robinson*



Artist's Proof

Paul Aho